New York Tribune

PART IV. SIX PAGES. SUNDAY, AUGUST 15, 1915. PART IV. SIX PAGES.

MUSIC, RESORTS, SOCIETY AND DRAMA.

PATRIOTIC SONGS OF THE WARRING NATIONS

By H. E. KREHBIEL.

Along with European dress, customs and habits Japan has adopted the principles of European music into its system of education, though in vulgar or popular practice the ancient system remains. The bands of the Japanese army and navy are modelled on those of Europe and the bandmasters are (or were until recently) German musicians. The introduction of the Occidental art has brought with it a new school of pseudo-Japanese music, which will be illustrated presently; but there still persists in Dai Nippon an ancient national hymn which not only deserves its long and honorable history but is worthy of preservation during an equally long future. It is not recorded who it was that wrote either words or melody of "Kimigayo" (harmony, of course, it originally had none), but tradition credits the words to a collection of poems made at the imperial command at the beginning of the tenth century of the Christian era, and speculation has given the tune an age of about fifty years. Why fifty years a student of folk music would be hard put to it to explain, for the melody is in all respects as typical as the poem. It has all the characteristics of old Japanese music and of the older Chinese music, which was its root. It is typically square-toed in rhythm and five-toned (pentatonic) in scale.

Japanese history, whether political, literary or musical, is a twilight field into which I have not the temerity to enter, unless it be in the character of a recounter of fairy tale and legend; but there seems to be no valid reason why I should not indulge in a little speculation, even if it prove fantastic, as to the author of the national hymn of Japan. Tradition, as I have said, derives it from a collection of poems made in the early years of the tenth century—in point of fact, in the reign of the Mikado Daigo Tenno. History, or tradition, counts Sugawara Michezane among the greatest ones of Daigo's reign—the greatest of his poets and statesmen. The story of Michezane, as it has been told in books and represented on the stage, is a story of persecution and that loyalty to the head of the state which blends the concepts of patriotism and religion. Lafcadio Hearn has retold one of the legends concerning the poet, who is revered as the god of caligraphy, and the origin of the poem which makes reference to the subject of the legend was discussed by Miss Natalie Curtis in an article on the classic dance of Japan published in the last number (for July) of "The Musical Quarterly." Michezane was a teacher at Tokio, a governor of Sanuki and a Minister of State under Daigo Tenno, who loved him immeasurably. But the Fujawara, powerful nobles and jealous, poisoned the mind of the Mikado against him and he was sent in banishment to the island of Kiu Shiu. Even in his lonely and unjust exile, however, his attachment to the Son of Heaven remained. Every day he blessed the memory of his sovereign and every day in reverent homage he pressed to his forehead an embroidered Chinese robe, the gift of Daigo, and in loyal ecstasy inhaled the fragrance of its perfumed folds. And there he wrote a poem which has come down through the centuries, which is still recited while its sentiments are portrayed by the dramatic dancers of the Flowery Kingdom, even as the hard trials, great tribulations and measureless devotion of Michezane are depicted in the theatres. Here is the poem:

A year ago,
A year ago to-night,
In Sei Ryo I served my Emperor.

Verses we spake,
Of autumnal thought.
Now I am heartbroken
And alone.

Only the honored robe,
His honored gift,
Is with me yet.

Uplifting this
Now day by day,
The lingering scent
I reverently breathe.

The tenth century was the period in Japan's history in which the imperial power entered upon its decadence and the temporal rulership of the shoguns began; but this circumstance serves only to throw into higher relief the sentiment of Michezane's poem and of its companion piece, "Kimigayo," the words of which, done literally into English, read: "May the Imperial Reign last for one thousand generations, until the pebbles in the river become big rocks covered with moss!" which, to recur to a thought discussed here some weeks ago, is only another way of saying, "God save the King! Long live the King! May the King live forever!"

When the war between Japan and China was in progress, some twenty years ago, a patriotic Japanese ditty was written, printed and sung which went to the tune of Dr. Root's "Tramp, tramp, tramp, the boys are marching." This was strange news to all but those who had studied the progress of music in Japan and knew that for years that country had encouraged the westernization of its music. The policy dates back to 1871, when singing was placed in the curriculum of the public schools and an Institute of Music was established for the purpose of training teachers to carry out the purposes of the Board of Education. Mr. Isawa, the director of the institute, recommended that new music be provided for the schools by a careful revision of native music, a retention of that which seemed good and the introduction of approved foreign music. This sweeping reform decided upon, the Japanese government engaged Luther W. Mason, of Boston, to take charge of instruction in the institute. Mr. Mason remained in Tokio from March, 1880, till the summer of 1882, got a system of instruction under way and then resigned, his place being taken by F. Eckert, a German musician then in the service of the naval department.

Eckert left the Japanese service in 1889. He arranged the tune of "Kimigayo" for performance by military band and his arrangement was officially adopted by the government, which accounts for the circumstance that he is widely credited with being the author of the music of the hymn. A likelier story is that the melody was written by a native musician named Hayashi in 1880. But, as has been intimated, it has an ancient flavor which a composer who had come under the influence of the Occidental regime could only have retained by conscious effort.

The reform was extended to military music. Before me lies a book of patriotic songs entitled, "The Glory of Japan," which was published in 1896, the inspiring cause being the war with China. The words of the songs are by Haruchio Uji, "Manager of the Japanese War Song Association"; the melodies by Furuya, "First-Class Bandsman," both of the War Department. The songs are given in European notation and the poems in literal translations into English without attemnt at versification, the translations being made by J. Inouye. The publication affords evidence of the official attitude as well as the official taste of the Japanese government in respect of military music at the time, and this attitude and taste, no doubt, are those still prevalent. A preface by the authors is illuminative:

"The Emperor of Japan and his subjects are benignant and brave, and too high-minded to ill-treat others without cause; but China, by obstructing the independence of Corea and by her insolent conduct toward Japan, has compelled us unwillingly to raise our armies for her punishment. That Japan has, by her uninterrupted course of success in every battle, spread her military fame all over the world is a Heaven sent proof of the justice of her cause. It is, therefore, with the object of proclaiming to the world Japan's just cause and the loyalty and valor of her army and navy that this booklet is published, which contains songs in their praise set to suitable music."

One of the songs is printed on this page and a discussion of it is unnecessary. The character of the music is amply explained by the above remarks on the reform introduced in the system of musical education adopted in 1871. The words of the song are given in translation as follows:

THE MOONLIGHT ENCAMPMENT.

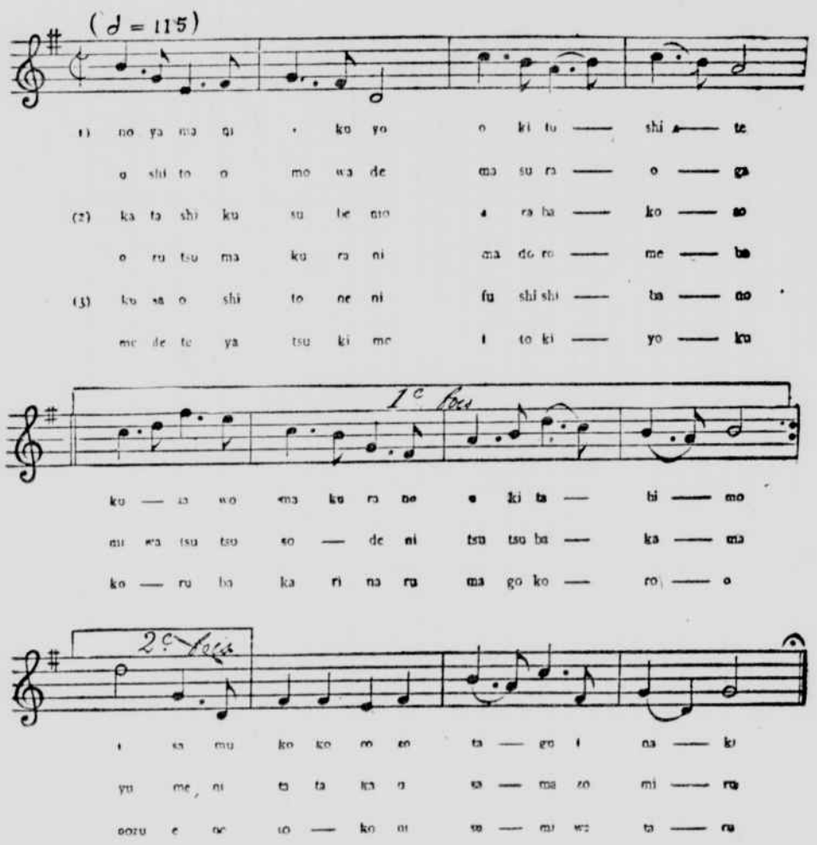
Words by Uji. Music by Furuya.

The brave men think nought of their hardships when they must sleep night after night on mountain and plain with the grass for their pillows. How unparalleled is their valor!

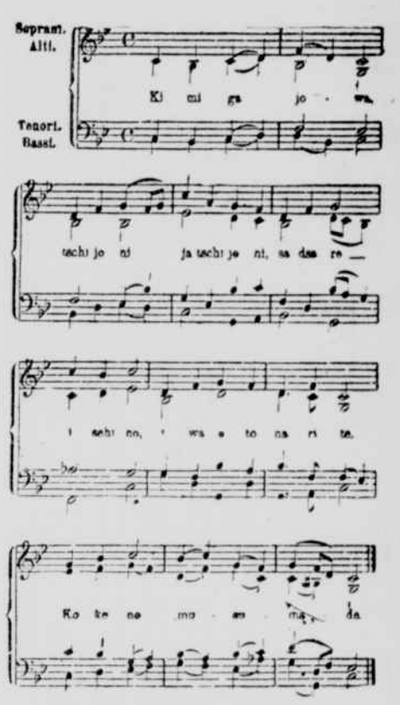
Lying down in their uniforms and dozing with their rifles for pillows, they dream of battles.

As they sleep on the grass for their beds with their earnest pure hearts, the moon lovingly sheds her clear light as she passes them on the plain!

The Anciet National Hymn of Dai Nippon, "Kimigayo," Founded on Tenth Century Poems



Japanese War Song of the Chinese War.



National Hymn of Japan.

CARMEL-BY-THE-SEA AND ITS PAGEANT-DRAMA

By Clara T. MacChesney

CARMEL, the home of the artist and the writer; the retreat of the lover of nature and of the simple life, gave its sixth pageant-drama early in July. No one has seen California who has not visited Carmel and witnessed a play given by the Forest Theatre Company. These pleasures had never been mine, but the gods are kind (sometimes) and July 2 found me jitneying over the wooded hill which separates Monterey from Carmel. The driver, of the loquacious variety, roused my imagination by calling it the "Haunted Wood." I also wondered if this was the same route taken by the zealous Father Serra a hundred and forty-four years ago, when he left teh mission he had just founded at Monterey to seek a better site.

At the end of a five-mile ride we swung around our last curve on the hillside into the main street of Carmel—that Carmel whose old mission pageants, interesting colony of painters and poets and wonders of nature have for years made it famous the world over. Here William Chase spent the summer last year with a large number of pupils; Robert Henri the year before.

Imagine an immense pine forest, divided in twain by a wide sandy road leading down to the sea. This main thoroughfare is lined on either side by the necessary small shops, post-office, etc. Many little wooden houses, generally dark brown in color, with their patches of garden, are dotted through the forest. Add an inn or two, several small churches, and you have, generally speaking, the settlement of Carmel.

At the far end of this road (called Ocean Avenue), lie the wonderful white sand dunes and the blue Pacific. At the left "hills rise over hills, heaving, waving, swelling in the most glorious, overpowering, unreadable majesty." What a setting for this idyllic colony, where care, the rush and strife of the outer life, are put away! Here the world-weary can find rest; the artist and writer inspiration; the sick a cure in the invigorating breezes of the pines or the ocean.

But seek not here, oh, luxury lover, paved streets, cement sidewalks, thés dansants, nor a course for sports. Leave behind your valets and maids, your lingerie gowns. Bring instead your khaki skirt, your sweater, your heavy walking boots, your knickers—a generous wide hat or, better, no hat at all. Be sensible (as I was not) and come prepared to comfortably enjoy the pleasures Carmel had to offer. Do not expect entertainment beyond rides, drives, walks, fishing, baths in the ocean; yet even the ever-present movie is here. The excitement is the arrival of the mail. Then the whole town assembles at the postoffice. The more energetic haunt the golf links or the tennis courts; the older folks the little library and the Arts and Crafts and Ceramic clubs. These adjuncts can be found in nearly every town. But it is here that nature has built one of her special temples. Except the nightingale in the hanging gardens of Spain, never have I heard such songbirds. A bird-lover equally impressed, after long study discovered one hundred and five varieties. In the trees close to the Pine Inn they were singing as fearlessly as if in the depths of the forest. Although July is late for wild flowers, yet the slopes facing the ocean south of Carmel were a feast of color to the eye. The ultramarine of the ocean rivals that of the Mediterranean; the sand dunes, motif for every student, are of a gleaming white, seldom to be found.

Carmel derives its name from Mt. Carmel in the Holy Land. The hills and plain of the Bay of Acre on the coast of the Mediterranean, the hills of Galilee and Mt. Carmel in the Holy Land have been duplicated here, but on a smaller scale. Because of this resemblance the three Carmelite friars who accompanied Sebastian Viscano, the Spanish navigator, when he first discovered this coast in 1602, prevailed upon him to call the river crossing the plain south of the forest Carmelo River and the mountain in the background Mount Carmel.

Another remarkable fact is that the cypress trees which grow on the point forming the northern boundary of Carmel Bay, within sight of our Mount Carmel, are of the same species as the cedars of Lebanon, which grow nowhere except near Biblical Mount Carmel. It is not remarkable that all this wisdom savors of a guidebook, for I've just copied it from one!

I soon found my way down to the beach. What a joy to fling one's self down flat on its pure whiteness and give up to the warmth of the sun, to the boom of the surf; the cries of children paddling in the water came faintly to my ears; the odor of the pines was wafted from the forest. I did all this, forgetting time and place. I rested my brain, crammed to the full with many attractions of the exposition. Being a city person, and thoughtless at that, I had not provided myself with a suitable hat. But I cared nothing for freckles or tan. I lay there gazing lazily at the waves boom in and roll up on the beach, and forgot the horrible war and all personal anxieties.

That night was to be given the first performance of the pageant-drama of the padres, "Junipero Serra," by the Forest Theatre Company.

Toward sunset I left my siesta on the beach and sought a tea room recommended for its dainty suppers. But the word "tearoom" did not appeal to me, for the breezes of the ocean and of the fragrant pines had given me a "faim de loup." I was destined to have not only a delicious and substantial meal, but an exhibition by two of the Indian maiden performers. They came in to show their beaded and fringed leather costumes and the eagle quills adorning their heads. And here, let me say, not only do the townspeople take great interest in the play, but many take part in it, as the plumber, the druggist, the doctor, the postmistress, etc. The boy who lugged my suitcase up to my room I saw later with bent head and folded hands, devoutly following the body of Father Serra to his grave. And could this cue of the plumber's be more opportune—"Thank heaven, he has come!"

The theatre is ten minutes' walk back of the town, in the depths of the forest. Six years ago a clearing was made in this magnificent grove of pines, and on a hill which sloped gradually to it rustic benches to seat twelve hundred people were built on the slope, taking the place of the manzanita and the laurel. Entirely surrounded by tall pines, the acoustics are perfect; the stage proper measures seventy feet in length and forty in depth, and was increased for the performances to give a 250-foot frontage for the accommodation of the four hundred or more actors, the fifty horses, the villages with their tepees and other elaborate settings.

At the appointed time I joined the line of heavily coated people, who, carrying rugs and extra wraps, wound through the forest to the theatre. Their lanterns and electric pocket lamps gleamed fitfully like fireflies.

I found my seat, wrapped my ulster closer around me and made myself comfortable for the evening. The stage was in darkness, the silhouette of tall black pines pierced the sky all around us. By the light of one of the powerful electric lamps I glanced over the story of the forthcoming performance. I find that this is the most ambitious of the six pageants given by the Forest Theatre Company, and is the work of Perry Newberry, Mary Austin, Grace MacGowan Cooke and Herbert Heron, who have also written plays expressly for production in this theatre.

"Junipero Serra" is the drama of the pioneer Franciscan friar, who, weak in body but strong in soul, after six weeks' voyage from San Diego, was the first to place the cross of Christ in the heart of California's wilderness. It is Carmel's own story, for here was his home, his death bed and his sepulchre. In many cases Serra's exact words and those of other principals in the drama have been taken from the chronicles of their contemporaries. The drama was made an exact historic picture of the times in California between the years of 1769 and 1784. The Indians, the mariners, the Mexican soldiers of those early days have been faithfully copied.

The story is in four acts or episodes, connected by the romance of Sergeant Ramon Ortiz, a Mexican soldier, and his undying affection for his sweetheart, Ynez Peralta. The programme says that the First Episode—but here my light was switched on to the stage and the semi-circle of tall trees in front of me and the play began.

From the left, down the hill through the trees, appeared pack mules and carriers laden with provisions and heavy bundles. They crossed the stage, disappeared at the back, returned, to appear with a second load of supplies. This was the embarking of Don Gaspar de Portola, first Governor of California. The San Carlos was being equipped for her maiden voyage into the unknown regions of California. Junipero Serra accompanied him to found a chain of missions on the coast. A procession of soldiers, real soldiers from the Presidio at Monterey, Troop H, 1st Cavalry, U. S. A.; singing, or rather humming, acolytes (for they did not know the words); of priests, filed across the stage and disappeared in the deep shadows of the trees.

Here a herald on a prancing horse announced the Viceroy of Mexico. With a cavalcade of gentlemen and ladies of the court, some being superb horsewomen, all richly garbed in stage dress, assembled on the water's edge (which the audience knew, of course, was at the back of the stage behind the trees), to wish God's speed to the adventurers. Friar Serra, tall and gaunt (Mr. Bechdolt certainly looked the part) stalked across the stage, but was stopped by a damsel in black (called a "penitent") on his way to the ship. He blessed and bade her farewell. Then followed a tearful scene between a soldier and his sweetheart, obscured by her large hat and feather, and the curtain came down (or would have, had there been one) on the cheers and the waving of handkerchiefs and scarves as the boat left the harbor.

When the lights were returned to us I saw the seats were well filled and I proceeded to scan the Second Episode to the music of a local band from Monterey.

The scene of this Second Episode was placed at Carmel in 1770, and showed an Indian village, with wigwams, women grinding corn, etc. An exciting war dance takes place, for some reason. A captured Indian princess is brought in, who in haughty imperious tones refuses to marry the Indian warrior selected for her. After a thrilling scene she is condemned to be burned at the stake. As fagots are being piled around her Portola's trumpet is heard; the Indians, who have never seen a white face, disappear through the trees, leaving Zuella to her fate. Then struggles in the discouraged, hungry band of explorers, dragging their sick on litters. The Indian princess is discovered and released—of course, by Ramon—Portola calls a council as to whether the expedition be abandoned or not. A quarrel takes place, and after wrangling for and against, it is decided to turn back to San Diego. Here one sees at the right a band of small Indians armed with bows and arrows, stealthily creeping through the trees. With wild yells they tear across the front of the scene. These were the small boys of the Columbia Club from San Francisco, who were encamped near by. How they did yell, and how they must have enjoyed playing wild Indian! They were so realistic in appearance, as well as in their yells, that the audience burst into laughter.

Portola hastily orders a large cross to be erected. A message is placed beside it, directing any rescuing ship to follow down the coast; the disheartened explorers hurriedly retreat, followed by the prowling savages.

The Third Episode is the most brilliant and interesting of the four. The scene is laid several years later in the Presidio at Monterey Serra, in the mean time, having founded there the San Carlos Mission. Later it was transferred to Carmel, five miles away. A fiesta is taking place. Many gay cavaliers and their ladies dance, parade and flirt before us. The dark background of tall trees made a splendid setting for their brilliant costumes. The Spanish dances, in groups or singly, were splendidly executed, the only lack being good spirited music. How the two girls who gave special dances ever succeeded as well as they did was a mystery. The piano accompanist in the grove behind must have played in the dark! The gay scene changes to a quarrel over the beautiful Indian princess. She is rescued from a too affectionate soldier by Ramon again, who, you must not forget, has left a lady love behind in Mexico. He is arrested by the Governor, Pedro Fages, who is also attracted to Zuella. Father Serra enters and roundly denounces the Governor and his soldiers for their treatment of the Indians, Zuella in particular.

After a wordy battle between Fages and Serra, the latter succeeds in cowing the Governor, who retires with his mounted suite slowly across the stage. The Governor was later deprived of his post at the request of Serra. I saw in the programme that this quarrel is historic.

The Last Episode deals almost entirely with the zealous old priest and his last days at Carmel, eleven years later, in August, 1784. Feeble and at the point of death, he comes slowly on the stage, supported by his faithful priests. He has long been expecting permission from the Mexican Viceroy, as well as funds, which will enable him to complete his chain of missions. He calls his Indian converts around him. The Princess Zuella (twice rescued by Ramon) is in love with him, and pleads with him to flee with her and join her people. He wavers (she is very appealing, as well as beautiful), but he refuses and is faithful to the sweetheart he left behind in the First Episode. He is rewarded, for she soon rushes on to the stage and into his arms. She is brought by the long-looked-for messenger from the Viceroy, who, for lack of funds denies Serra further aid for his beloved missions. His heart breaks with disappointment and he is led dying from the stage. Shortly after his body is borne to its last resting place in the Carmel Mission, with a large attendance of Indians, converts, priests, soldiers and women. The same humming acolytes whose red caps and gowns made brilliant spots against the dark green filed slowly across the front of the stage. That again they did not know the words of their chant and almost broke down was the only fault in this magnificent scene.

As the audience rose to leave red lights were burned, showing the actors of the procession in black silhouette against the blacker pines. Huge bonfires were set ablaze down the main street to light us home.

Take it as a whole, the pageant was a great achievement, a huge success. Scenically, it could not be improved upon, unless the stage could have been larger. The mounted soldiers and cavaliers and the different processions had too little space in which to be effective. The costuming was historically correct and very striking.

The pageant was of peculiar interest to Carmel, as it dealt with its early history. The exposition, unfortunately, has had few pageants, but the success and merit of the drama of Junipero Serra decided the officials to permit its production on the Court of the Universe July 30 and 31.

The next day I visited the mission, half a mile from the town. On reaching the edge of the forest I saw it below, standing alone in the valley of Carmel. It faces east, to the waves of misty purple mountains; the blue ocean lies behind. It is a very picturesque old structure, with its moss covered dome.

In front are the ruins of the adobe walls of the buildings connected with the mission. It is the Mecca of the tourist and the subject for every artist who comes to Carmel. It was built by the Indians under the direction of Serra and his associates. Large blocks of chalk rock, found in the vicinity, were used for its construction. I was shown later the gash in the hillside where it was quarried. Four years were required to build it. A rectangular stockade of heavy posts was built around the church and its accompanying buildings, to protect the mission from hostile Indians, but nothing of this remains. The roof having fallen in, it was replaced by the present one of shingle, there not being sufficient funds to build one of tiles—more's the pity!

Originally large red tiles covered the floor. These were destroyed by long exposure to the elements, and the floor was left mostly of bare earth. Only one wall (the northern) is in its original state, the others having required a coat of plaster to preserve them. This is of a rich cream color, enlivened by patches of bright green moss. The front entrance is large and beautifully carved, and above it is a star-shaped window, showing evidence of being made with rude implements. Set in the façade, just above the window, is a small marble slab, reading: "Founded 1770—Restored 1884."

The original bells, which hung in the different towers, were found to be so badly cracked that they were melted and recast into new ones, which now hang in the tower of the Monterey church. Some of the old woodwork, hewn from the cypress trees inside the church, may be seen on the floor. The relic vandal has not only mutilated, but has also stolen, many parts of this valuable structure. Reverence for the few historic antiquities we possess is utterly lacking in many of our people. Why is this so?

On July 3, 1882, Serra's tomb and those of the other padres were formally located with great ceremony. They were found in the exact place given in the old records: "In the sanctuary, on the Gospel side, fronting the altar of Our Lady of Seven Dolors." The tomb containing the coffin is of stone and eight feet deep. The slabs were removed, the cover of each coffin found to be made of unplaned redwood and in a good state of preservation. The remains were viewed by the hundreds of people assembled.

On the left hand wall in the sanctuary is a marble slab. I read these words in Latin:

Here lie the remains
of the Administrator Rev. Father
Junipero Serra,
Order of Saint Francis,
Founder of the California Missions
And President.
Buried in Peace.
Died 28th day of August, A. D. 1784.
And his companions,
Rev. Fathers
John Crespi,
Julian Lopez,
Francis Lasuen.
May they rest in peace.